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The Election in Maryland—Letter of Governor
Bradford—Reply of President Lincoln.

LETTER OF GOVERNOR BRADFORD TO THE
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.
EXECUTIVE OFFICE, ANNAPOLIS.

October 31, 1863.

To his Excellency, President Lincoln:

SIR: Rumors are to day current, and they reach me in such a shape that I am bound to believe them, that detachments of soldiers are to be dispatched on Monday next to several of the counties of the State, with a view of being present at their polls on Wednesday next, the day of our State election. These troops are not residents of the State, and consequently are not sent for the purpose of voting; and, as there is no reason, in my opinion, to apprehend any riotous or violent proceedings at this election, the inference is unavoidable that these military detachments, if sent, are expected to exert some control or influence in that election. I am also informed that orders are to be issued from the military department, on Monday, presenting certain restrictions or qualifications on the right of suffrage—of what precise character I am not apprised—which the judges of election will be expected to observe. From my knowledge of your sentiments on these subjects, as expressed to Hon. R. Johnson, in my presence, on the 22d instant, as also disclosed in your letter of instructions to General Schofield, since published, in reference to the Missouri election, I cannot but think that the orders above referred to are without your personal knowledge; and I take the liberty of calling the subject to your attention, and invoke your interposition to countermand them. I cannot but feel that to suffer any military interference in the matter of our election, or to prescribe any test of oath to voters, when all the candidates in the State—with the exception, perhaps, of two or three in one Congressional district, are all loyal men—would be justly obnoxious to the public sentiment of the State. There are other reasons why such proceedings would appear as an offensive discrimination against our State. Our citizens are aware that highly important elections have recently taken place in other States, without, it is believed, any such interference by the Government authorities; and, if votes by hundreds of thousands have been allowed to be cast there without objection, and with no limit upon the elective franchise other than the State laws prescribe, and where one, at least, of the candidates so supported was considered so hostile to the Government that for months past he has been banished from the country, certainly any such interference as between the loyal men now candidates in this State would, under such comparisons, be more justly objectionable, and finds nothing in the present condition of things here to justify it. I rely, therefore, upon your Excellency for such an order as will prevent it.

I have the honor to be, with great respect,

Your Excellency's obedient servant

A. W. BRADFORD.

REPLY OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN TO GOVERNOR
BRADFORD.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
WASHINGTON, Nov. 2, 1863.

To his Excellency, A. W. Bradford, Governor
of Maryland:

SIR: Yours of the 31st ult. was received
about noon, and since then I have been giving

most earnest attention to the subject matter of it. At my call General Schenck has attended, and he assures me it is almost certain that violence will be used at some of the voting places on election day, unless prevented by his provost guards. He says that at some of those places the Union voters will not attend at all or run a ticket, unless they have some assurance of protection. This makes the Missouri case of my action, in regard to which you express your approval.

The remaining point of your letter is a protest against any person offering to vote being put to any test not found in the laws of Maryland. This brings us to a difference between Missouri and Maryland. With the same reason in both States, Missouri has, by law, provided a test for the voter with reference to the present rebellion, while Maryland has not. For example, General Trimble, captured, fighting us at Gettysburg, is, without recanting his treason, a legal voter by the laws of Maryland. Even Gen. Schenck's order admits him to vote, if he recants upon oath. I think that is cheap enough. My order in Missouri, which you approve, and General Schenck's order here, reach precisely the same end. Each assures the right of voting to all loyal men, and whether a man is loyal each allows that man to fix by his own oath. Your suggestion that nearly all the candidates are loyal, I do not think quite meets the case. In this struggle for the nation's life I cannot so confidently rely on those whose election may have depended upon disloyal votes. Such men, when elected, may prove true, but such votes are given them in the expectation that they will prove false. Nor do I think that to keep the peace at the polls, and to prevent the persistently disloyal from voting, constitutes just cause of offence to Maryland. I think she has her own example for it. If I mistake not, it is precisely what General Dix did when your Excellency was elected Governor. I revoke the first of the three propositions in General Schenck's General Order No. 58, not that it is wrong in principle, but because the military being, of necessity, exclusive judges as to who shall be arrested, the provision is liable to abuse. For the revoked part I substitute the following:

That all provost marshals and other military officers do prevent all disturbance and violence at or about the polls, whether offered by such persons as above described, or by any other person or persons whatever.

The other two propositions of the order I allow to stand. General Schenck is fully determined, and has my strict order besides, that all loyal men may vote, and vote for whom they please.

Your obedient servant,

A. LINCOLN,

President of the United States.

The Washington Chronicle in complaining of Gov. Bradford, says that "his letter does not show him to be, what he was elected for, an Unconditional Union man with Republican tendencies;" and it adds, that "late on Monday night, apparently after he had received the President's reply, he issued a proclamation addressed to the judges of election, which was promptly suppressed by General Schenck; and is described by him as "designed to produce collision between the military power and citizens assembled at the polls to vote at the election." The document must have been of a remarkable character from the description given of it by the General, and from the fact that the Baltimore papers of yesterday morning were peremptorily forbidden to publish it."

The Baltimore Sun of this morning publishes the Proclamation of Gov. Bradford, which he issued, "in pamphlet form," on Monday evening. It is a statement that Gen. Schenck's military order, published yesterday, "was issued without any consultation with or notice to the constituted authorities of the State;" that it was unnecessary and unjust, and that according to the constitution and laws of the State the judges of the election are alone to determine the right of any one to vote, who appears at the polls; and declaring that "whatever power the state possesses shall be exerted to protect the judges for any thing done by them in the execution of the laws."—To this Proclamation Gen. Schenck has published a reply, in which he says that, he considered the Governor's proclamation "as having a tendency to invite and suggest disturbance, and that, therefore, he had taken measures for restricting, as far as possible, its circulation in those parts of the State to be most affected by it, until there could go out with it the letter of the President of the United States on the subject, written to Governor Bradford.

It has been ascertained by a reconnoissance sent out from the Army of the Potomac that the Confederates, in small force, have recently fortified the approaches to the Rappahannock on the north side of that river. It is reported that such information of the position and strength of Gen. Lee's army has been gained as to enable Gen. Meade to assume offensive operations. A correspondent of the New York Tribune says that there are indications that active movements will soon commence and a battle be brought on.

The Washington Chronicle says: "We learn that all able-bodied troops under the command of General Martindale, military governor, are to be relieved from duty here and sent to the field. Their places will be supplied by the Invalid corps. The 157th Pennsylvania volunteers have already been relieved."

Geo. W. Petty, a citizen of Prince William county, Va., who lives about four miles from Bristoe Station, who voluntarily gave himself up to the Federal pickets, was before the Provost Marshal yesterday, and, on taking the oath, was released.

At a factory in Portland, Me., nearly one thousand bushels of potatoes are "concentrated" for the U. S. army, every day. All the water is absorbed, leaving about five pounds of nutriment from the sixty pounds which a bushel of potatoes averages, and the concentration is ground up, giving it the appearance of Indian meal.

It is said that Messrs. Jay Cooke & Company have made nine hundred and sixty thousand dollars by the sale of the five-twenty Government bonds. They are the agent of the Government.